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AUTHOR Wiener, William K.
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ABSTRACT

Technical Assistance for Mainstreaming Exceptional Children (Project TAMEC) assists regular education personnel in working with the mildly handicapped children in their schools. An extension of this North Carolina-based project is an onsite administrator inservice program--the Three Phase Program for School Administrators. Organizational development is the focus of the program with the philosophy that the school principal needs to fill the role of change agent if quality services for the handicapped are to be offered with a high degree of consistency at the local school level. A chronology of the activities during the 3-year project period (1980-83) demonstrates the effectiveness of the research and development cycle to develop an individualized approach to inservice preparation. A bibliography with nine citations is appended. (MLF)

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A Research and Development Approach for the Development of An In-Service Program for School Administrators

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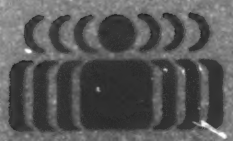

PROJECT TRADE

LENOIR RHYNE COLLEGE HICKORY N.C. 28601

(Presented at the 1984 Annual Convention of the American Educational Research Association)

BACKGROUND

Project TAMEC (Technical Assistance for Mainstreaming Exceptional Children) has been a Federally funded project sponsored by the Division of Personel Preparation of the Office of Special Education/Rehabilitation Services of the U.S. Department of Education through Lenoir-Rhyne College. The goals of this project are to assist regular education personnel in working with the mildly handicapped children in their schools. To meet these goals two distinct, but complementary on-site in-service programs have been developed.

TAMEC's initial program, The Sweetwater Plan, was designed for regular classroom teachers with implementation by the Resource Teachers or other Special Education personnel assigned to a school. The focus of this in-service program is to give teachers general information about the mildly handicapped student, plus materials and methods for working more directly with these children. The Sweetwater Plan consist of the following locally validated materials:

1. Teaching the Mildly Handicapped in the Regular Classroom- An activity text for regular classroom teachers.

2. The Sweetwater Plan Facilitator's Manual - An informational booklet for in-service facilitators featuring suggestions for implementing the in-service program in their schools.

3. A set of overhead masters to supplement the in-service facilitator's presentations.

The intent of the Sweetwater Plan is to provide a process for regular classroom teachers to teach the handicapped students in their classes through participation in an on-site in-service program which can be implemented within the time frame of their workday.

The Three Phase Program for School Administrators represents an extension of the Sweetwater Plan in the direction of providing principals with the competencies needed to implement an array of services and programs for handicapped students that will meet the individual needs of their school This second facet of Project TAMEC has been developed around the philosophy that the school principal needs to fill the role of change agent if quality services for handicapped are to be offered with a high degree of consistency at the local school level. Thus, the focus of the program is on organizational development.

The Three Phase Program takes the point of view that The Education of All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142) and Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1972 are major driving forces for change in both curriculum and the organizational structure of the school. The law mandates instructional services for handicapped students based upon multi-faceted evaluation and education in the Least Restrictive Alternative. Generation of an I.E.P. to meet the specific needs of the youngster, with the expectation of quality service delivery must be present in each school. As a result, many in-service programs have been aimed at developing competencies in regular and special instructional personnel. The role of administrator as an integral factor in the delivery of services has too often been bypassed.

This program advocates that the key to successful and lasting implementation of Federal and State regulations regarding the education of handicapped children lies with school principals using their skill and willingness to modify existing school organizational structures to meet service delivery mandates. In-service programs geared to teachers and district-wide planning efforts which include principals do not appear to be the most effective way to bring about the desired changes. Through participation in a program specifically designed for administrators, positive changes in programs and services for the handicapped in individual schools may be achieved.

It is the intent of this paper to describe the utilization of Research and Development approach in the production of the Three Phase Program for School Administrators. Through presenting a chronology of the activities of Project TAMEC during the three-year project period (1980-1983), the effectiveness of the R&D cycle to develop an individualized approach to in-service preparation will be demonstrated.

GENERAL THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

The Research and Development approach outlined by Borg and Gall (1971,1979,1983) was applied to the development of the Three Phase Program. As this approach had been used to develop and localiy validate the Sweetwater Plan, (Reid,1979), it was felt that the same methodology could be utilized in the development of the administrator preparation program. The steps involved in the Research and Development Cycle may be summarized in the following manner: (Borg and Gall, 1979,1983)

1. Conceptualization of the Program: This step involves reviewing existing programs and defining skills, instructional sequences and objectives for the training materials.

2. Developing a Preliminary Form of the Product: A 'rough draft' is prepared for initial field testing.

3. Preliminary Field Testing: During this step, the product is tested upon a relatively small sample with evaluating data collected at the conclusion of the test.

4. Product Revision: The materials are revised based upon evaluative input from the preliminary field test.

5. Main Field Testing: The revised product is tested with a larger sample and evaluative data collected at the conclusion of the testing period.

6. Operational Product Revision: Similar to step 4, revisions are made in the Main Field Test Version of the materials which are suggested by evaluative data.

7. Operational Field Testing: A larger sample is utilized for a final field test of the product, with evaluative data collected and analyzed at the conclusion of the test.

8. Final Product Revision: Operational field test reuslts are utilized to make final revisions.

9. Dissemination and Implementation: Operationalizing marketing and product distribution strategies through product reporting.

THE APPLICATION OF THE R & D APPROACH

While Borg and Gall (1971, 1979, 1983) report the ideal approach to product development, the nature of the in-service materials developed for the Three-Phase Program; the organizational characteristics of the school districts that participated in field testing the materials; and the limited financial resources allocated to the product led to some modification of these steps. An examination of the actual developmental process of the Three Phase Program in light of the ideal illustrates how the R&D approach may be implemented (i spite of the idiosyncracies and political ebb and flow of local school districts) without sacrificing the reputability of the product.

1. Conceptualization of the Program: (Pre-project)

a. Determining the Need:Lessons from the Sweetwater Plan:

The experiences of the Project TAMEC Staff in gaining entree to schools and securing teachers to participate in the development and testing of the Sweetwater Plan (1977-1980) underlined the key role of the principal. Whether access to individual schools could be gained for a presentation of the project; the number of teachers who eventually took part in the program; and the degree of enthusiasm with which the teachers participated seemed to be dependent upon the principal's level of understanding and attitude toward programs for exceptional children.

Perhaps the most difficult facet of developing and implementing the Sweetwater Plan was to convince principals of the need for in-service preparation of regular classroom teachers. During the first two years of the project, nine school districts were contacted to elicit their cooperation in providing teachers for training. These districts represented a potential of ninety-three (93) schools containing some combination of grades K-8 and a pool of 2031 teachers to participate in the project.

The method of gaining access to schools used by the Project Staff consisted of meeting with appropriate central office staff to explain the preparation program and, depending upon district procedures, either presenting the program at a principals' meeting or leaving the explanation of the project and the initial contact with potential schools to a district staff member. Of the nine school districts contacted, three (3) indicated that they would not be interested following the initial meeting. Of the remaining six (6) districts, contact with principals was made by the coordinator of special education in two (2) and the Project Staff was invited to present the program to principals in the other four (4). Based upon presentations to the principals, twenty-five (25) of the sixty-two (62) school administrators invited the TAMEC Staff to speak to their teachers about the program and request their participation on a voluntary basis. Following the presentations to school faculties, five (5) of the principals strongly urged their teachers to participate and three (3) of these administrators took part in some or all of the program. In the remaining schools, support of the project by principals ranged from endorsement to making the teachers aware of the program as another in-service option for which they could sign up if they wished. During the first two (2) years of the project, the Sweetwater Plan was presented to teachers representing eighteen (18) schools. There seemed to be a correlation between the degree of support shown by the principal during the introduction of the program and the number of teachers who volunteered to participate.

To gain some insight into the reasons for the apparent lack of interest in on-site in-service preparation for regular classroom teachers, an informal survey was conducted with principals and supervisory personnel in each of the nine (9) districts. From the seventy-two (72) people questionned, the following general reasons were cited:

"Teachers in my school have enough to do without taking another course."

"My teachers are doing a good job."

"Most of my teachers are enrolled in graduate programs."

"We had in-service last year."

"We're involved in writing a self-study for accreditation."

"My teachers have enough renewal credits."

"Our schedule does not permit this sort of thing."

"Special education teachers handle this. Classroom teachers aren't involved with those kids."

The attitudes encountered by the project staff during their work with the Sweetwater Plan seemed to indicate that administrators were assigning a rather low priority to assisting their teachers with the implementation of PL 94-142 on the local school level. Although principals seemed to be familiar with state and federal regulations concerning programs for the handicapped and appeared to have made some organizational modification to provide services for exceptional children (e.g. the transition from self-contained to resource-room services), the quality and extent of the implementation of the law in individual schools seemed to be affected by the following factors:

1. Misinterpretation or Unclear Interpretation of the Regulations to School Personnel. Although many meetings sponsored by various agencies of State government have been held for all levels of the school district's hierarchy concerning PL 94-142, information about such basics as I.E.P. writing, composition of school-based committees and Due Process is, at times, as diverse and changeable as the presenters and the divisions they represent.

2. Nebulous Perceptions on the Part of School Personnel about the expectations of local, state and Federal monitoring agencies regarding programming and accountability. Some districts which have experienced state and Federal audits of placement procedures and I.E.P.'s asserted that their programs were lacking because "we didn't really know what they wanted."

In addition, the realization of Due Process Procedures by parents and advocacy groups coupled with an apparent increase in the number of cases to come before school hearing officers have placed some schools in a defensive mood. In this atmosphere, parents and the community may be viewed as the enemy. Many teachers and administrators who are genuine in their desire to provide adequate and appropriate servcies to handicapped students seem to be caught in the bind of never knowing what will satisfy some parents.

3. Anxiety and insecurity on the Part of teachers and administrators about the effect educating handicapped children within the least restrictive alternative will have on them. Many regular classroom teachers and administrators seem to fear, reject, and feel inadequate about dealing with children whom they perceive as different. Unknowns about how 'normal' children will react to the exceptional child in the regular classroom, parental feelings, and working with resource teachers and other support personnel tend to color a negative picture for regular educational personnel.

b. Review of Existing Programs for School Administrators:

The need for a program especially designed for school administrators was underlined by a review of abstracts of in-service preparation programs found in The Consumer's Guides to Personnel Preparation Programs (Teachers Education/Special Education-The University of New Mexico) and the Resource Directory issued by the National In-Service Network (University of Indiana) during 1978 and 1979. Few programs seemed to deal directly with school administrators. Those that did offer in-service preparation to school administrators appeared to either focus upon training teams of school personnel or involving the principal in programs geared to the needs of regular classroom teachers. The format of in-service training programs seemed to follow an intensive workshop approach on a state, regional or local district level, where one team from a district generated policies and plans regarding programs for exceptional children. Limited follow-up and technical assistance to individual schools to assist in program implementation seemed to be available.

c. Generation of Basic Assumptions, Goals and Competencies for the Administrator Preparation Program:

1. Basic Assumptions:

The TAMEC project, through the development of the Three Phase Program, attempted to fill a void by providing an on-site in-service experience for school administrators based upon the following assumptions:

a. The problem of providing adequate and appropriate services for exceptional students cannot be solved by adopting a single special personnel utilization model or school organizational plan that will be implemented in all schools in a district. There are no panaceas.

b. A diagnostic-prescriptive model used to provide individual educational services to students must be applied to individual schools with plans to implement PL 94-142 fashioned to meet the particular school's pupil population, staff and community.

c. If programs for exceptional children are to be successfully implemented, they must be built upon the foundation that presently exists in a school. Existing staff competencies, current programs and perceptions of school community relationships must be taken into account if a new program is to have a lasting effect.

These assumptions led to the idea of the school administrator as a Change Agent and the perception that the process of change for the school organization paraileled the Diagnostic-Perscriptive process used to formulate educational programs for students receiving Special Education services. A review of a number of Diagnostic-Perscriptive Models (e.g. Peter 1965; Cartwright and Cartwright, 1974; Stellern, 1978) seemed to suggest that the steps that must be taken after the initial referral of a child for special services (assessment, formulation of a diagnosis based upon assessment data, and generation of prescriptive strategies) were directly applicable to the school organization.

An assessment of the individual school is needed to gain insight into the interpersonal relationships and perceptions of teachers, parents and the community toward the school. Data from the assessment must be interpreted to ascertain organizational strengths, weaknesses, and critical areas that need immediate attention. The assessment of the present status of the school may underline perceptions, attitudes and interpersonal relationships that must be altered prior to implementing programs. Where input into formulating the child's educational program must come from a number of sources, the delineation of the individual school's model for service delivery should be arrived at through the synthesis of a variety of opinions.

The program of service delivery for the school may be compared to the child's Individual Educational Program. It should be dynamic in nature, geared to the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, and designed to provide instructional programs and support in what may be the least restrictive environment for the school.

2. Program Goal:

The basic thrust of in-service programming for regular and special classroom teachers has been to provide them with competencies needed to implement Individual Educational Programs (I.E.P.'s) for handicapped students. The goal of the Three Phase Program is to assist the school to formulate and operationalize Individual School Plans (I.S.P.'s) which will have a positive impact upon handicapped children and those who serve them.

3. Competencies

To meet the goal of the program, the following competencies were delineated for administrators which provided a framework for the materials of the Three Phase Program:

a. Translating State and Federal regulations concerning the education of handicapped students into terms that can be applied to their individual schools.

b. Understanding the needs of handicapped students in terms of academic and non-academic behavioral expectations.

c. Understanding the techniques and variety of service delivery patterns available for providing programs and support to the handicapped in their school district.

d. Assessing their school faculty and and segments of the school's community to gain insight into the present status of their school.

e. Interpreting the data to gain a perspective of the present status of their school.

f. Using the data to formulate goals, objectives and strategies for an Individual School Plan (I.S.P.) which will be implemented in their school.

g. Engaging in a continuous assessment, planning and implementation process to meet the changing needs of their school.

2. Developing a Preliminary Form of the Product: (July-September 1980)

Based upon needs, the existing in-service administrator training programs, and the goals and competencies established for the Program, it appeared that the problem of providing school principals with meaningful on-site in-service experiences to prepare them for the change agent role could be resolved with a three stage program:

Phase I: Awareness and Skill Acquisition

Phase II: Application

Phase III: Follow-up

Participation in the initial phase would assist the administrator in developing an awareness of the impact that PL 94-142, Section 504, and State and Federal regulations have on the local school; collecting and interpreting assessment data about the school; and setting goals and formulating strategies to meet the individual needs of the school through the development of an Individual School Plan (I.S.P.) Phase II would involve the operationalization of the I.S.P. and Phase III would be concerned with assisting the administrator with the on-going process of assessment, planning and program implementation.

During this step in the R&D Process, an initial draft of A Study Guide for Phase I: Awareness and Skill Acquisition was developed. The goal of this handbook was to enable the administrator to develop skills for collecting and interpreting data about his/her school and community to form the basis for an Individual School Plan.

While additional materials could not be developed until the subjects of the preliminary field test completed Phase I, the general specifications and format for the Phase II: Problems and Solutions Handbook and the Facilitator's Manual for the Three Phase Program for School Administrators were delineated during this stage of the R&D Cycle. The Problems and Solutions Handbook was to consist of information gathered from interviews with administrators who had completed their I.S.P.'s and data from logs kept by the principals during the second phase of the program. The intent of the Problems and Solutions Handbook was to present principals with a compendium of objectives and successful strategies for meeting I.S.P. goals to assist them in developing

workable plans. Based upon the data supplied by participating principals, I.S.P. strategies would be listed by objective, with a description of the advantages and disadvantages associated with each strategy.

The Facilitiator's Manual would be based upon the experiences of the Project TAMEC Staff as they implemented the Three-Phase Program. It would contain suggestions for assisting principals through each of the three phases of the program, information about the data gathering instruments utilized in Phases II and III and Recommendations about analysis and interpretation of data in the generation of I.S.P.s. The Facilitators Manual would be intended for use by district office personnel responsible for meeting in-service needs of professional staff, individual school principals who wish to implement the Three Phase Program on their own; and consultants working a school district or individual schools.

3. Preliminary Field Testing: (September 1980-May 1981)

Eight school districts (N=136 principals) within a forty (40) mile radius of Lenoir-Rhyne College were contacted to elicit their cooperation in one of the field tests of the Three Phase Program. A relatively modest level of funding for the project ($25,000) per year restricted the locations for field tests to areas which were within a one-hour driving distance for on-site visits. To gain access to districts, initial phone contact was made with either the Superintendent of Schools or the Director of Special Education with the objective of setting up a meeting to explain the program in detail to appropriate school personnel. One school district agreed to meet with the Project Staff to discuss their participation in the preliminary field tests; three indicated interest in the project, agreeing to consider participation at a later time; and the remaining four (4) districts felt that their participation would not be possible in the 'foreseeable future.'

The Project Staff met with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Schools of the first district. They agreed to request all of their principals (N=21) to participate in the preliminary field test. A meeting with the principals was scheduled and descriptive materials about the project were given to the Superintendent for dissemination to his staff.

Prior to meeting with the principals, packets containing the first draft of A Study Guide for Phase I: Awareness and Skill Acquisition and the data collection instruments were prepared for each principal. Ample copies of the following assessment devices were included:

a. Profile of a School--Form T (Feitler, 1972). An instrument designed to elicit teachers' perceptions of the 'Now' and 'Ideal' characteristics of their school organization.

b. Teacher Perception of Principal Behavior (Blumberg and Amidon, 1965). A short rating form to determine teachers' perceptions of the interpersonal behaviors of their principal.

c. Val-Ed (Schutz, 1967). An instrument to be completed by the administrator, teachers, and a random selection of parents to determine the congruence of values toward education present in the staff and community.

d. Parent-School Communications Questionnaire (F.S.C.Q.) (Wiener and Blumberg, 1973) A questionnaire to be given to a random selection of parents to elicit their perceptions of the openness of the school.

e. Present Status of Special Education Programs - A questionnaire to elicit the Administrator's awareness of the types of programs for exceptional children in his school and the school district.

A tentative schedule of more large group sessions with principals was also devised to facilitate the implementation of Phase I. Large group meetings were to include sessions on scoring the instruments, interpreting the results, Force Field Analysis, and I.S.P. generation. Project Staff felt that information in these areas would be pertinent to all of the participants and would utilize time more efficiently.

At the first meeting with the administrators, while discussing details about the program and data collection for Phase I, it became evident that the principals had not received information about the project nor were they aware of the committment made for them by their superintendent. Project staff members found themselves dealing with hostility and needed to minimize large group contacts as the administrators complained of constraints on their time. After a negotiation of the time to be spent in the program, and a complete explanation of the three phases of the project, the administrators agreed to participate. The time frame for the project was stated as approximately one (1) school year to complete Phases I and II, with Phase III to be completed on a voluntary basis. Several principals shared the Central Office memo describing the project as a one-session meeting on communication skills.

The curtailing of large group sessions led the Project Coordinator to spend his time meeting individually with principals to assist in data collection, scoring, interpretation and I.S.P. formulation. While these activities were repetitious and time consuming, individualized sessions were of great assistance in refining the data collection, scoring and the interpretation processes for Phase I of the Program, as well as clarifying the use of Force Field Analysis for formulating I.S.P. objectives and strategies. A salient benefit of the individualized sessions was the development of rapport between project staff and the principals together with insight into how the program could improve the administrators planning and implementation skills in all areas.

The preliminary field test for Phase I materials had been scheduled to be completed within a four month period. However, passive-aggressive behaviors on the part of some of the principals (e.g. 'forgetting' appointments with the Project Coordinator, 'losing' data, etc.) necessitated a lengthening of this period to six months or longer. While the Project Staff wished to bring closure to this phase of the R&D Process and initiate a field test of the revised Phase I materials in a second school district the experiences of the Project Staff with school personnel against a background of organizational upheaval underlined the importance of completing the preliminary field test at the pace of the principals and adjusting the Project's time frame accordingly. It was felt that the uncertainties of the principals related to the retirement of the Superintendent, and the resultant political activity, would provide valuable input into the Facilitator's Manual and test the viability of the program in an unsettled situation. In addition to the anxiety caused by an impending change in leadership within the district, rumor of drastic State and Federal cutbacks added to the unsettled atmosphere of the district.

At this point, the Project Staff made the decision to continue with the preliminary field test with the first school district and begin a second round of field tests of the Phase I materials in the other district. As data collection and scoring of the instruments had been completed in most of the schools, and evaluative data collected through interviews with the principals, it was felt that the Phase I study guide could be revised with some degree of confidence.

4. Product Revision (January-February, 1981)

An analysis of interview data supplied by the principals participating in the preliminary field test indicated a need for more specific instructions in the administration and scoring of the various instruments used in the assessemnt process. This led to independent task analyses of the administration and scoring procedures by the Project Director and the Project Coordinator which were combined in a revision of the Phase I materials. Copies of the instruments were also submitted to the Director of the College Computer Center to investigate the feasibility of computerized scoring and analysis.

As the administrators involved in the preliminary field test were still involved in the data interpretation and I.S.P. formulation processes and the second school district was willing to begin participation in the project, it was decided that a partial version of the revised Study Guide for Phase I: Awareness and Skill Acquisition would be issued to the second field test participants, with further installments supplied following the completion and evaluation of Phase I by the first group of administrators.

5. Main Field Testing: (February, 1981 - May, 1982)

At this point in the R&D Cycle as applied to the Three Phase Program, the sequential order of steps became somewhat blurred as a result of logistics, individual differences between project participants and the transience of the school superintendents.

Borg and Gall (1971, 1979, 1983) suggest that participants in the Main Field test be expanded in number; however, changes in the superintendency of five (5) of the eight (8) school districts in the area limited the potential pool of districts to the one which indicated it would begin to participate during Spring of 1981. An additional school district related that they would participate in the project during the 1982-83 school year.

Large group sessions in the Main field test school district were limited to an introductory meeting. Within two weeks following the initial presentation individual appointments were set with each principal for an hour block of time to assist them in facilitating the data collection process. The Project Coordinator met with each principal in the district on the average of once every three weeks for the remainder of the 1980-81 school year to insure the completion of the data collection and scoring process.

Assessment data from the second school district was collected and scored by the conclusion of the 1980-81 school year. Three (3) of the seven (7) principals participated in the interpretation and I.S.P. formulation process during the summer of 1981, while the remainder of the principals engaged in this process during the Fall of 1981.

During the summer of 1981, revisions were made in the Study Guide for Phase I to include evaluative input from the Preliminary Field Test group which had completed the data interpretation and I.S.P. formulation process and the Main Field Test participants who had completed the data collection process. Thus, part of the Study Guide had undergone a second revision and was in readiness for the operational field test, while the second portion of the Guide had been revised for the Main Field Test group to use in the summer and Fall of 1981.

The Project staff was faced with dealing with some radical changes in the Fall of 1981 as they attempted to conduct a preliminary field test of Phase II with the initial test group. While the newly appointed, non-local superintendent gave his tacit approval to project continuation, half of the principals had been transferred and three were promoted to Central Office positions. The responsibility for staff development had been delegated to one of the new Central Office Staff who had been a principal. While he endorsed continuation of the project he indicated that the project staff would have to survey individual principals to elicit their agreement to continue.

Agreement was forthcoming from eleven (11) of the twenty-one (21) principals while the others indicated problems associated with moving to a new school, impending retirement and a lack of interest in the project as reasons for termination of their participation. Promotion of the Three Phase Program as assisting with their adjustment to a new school elicited promises from three (3) of the seven (7) principals to participate in the 1982-83 school year. Of the eleven (11) participants, four (4) of the principals who had been transferred to new schools (two were first year principals) requested a repetition of Phase I rather than use the data that had been gathered by their predecessor. Thus, the sample for Phase II Preliminary field test of the materials had dwindled to seven (7).

The concept of the Phase II materials as a handbook in I.S.P. implementation for administrators would not be damaged by the relatively small sample of participants; however, the entries in the Handbook would be substantially smaller and more limited in scope when they were presented to the principals participating in the Main Field Test. The main field test group described their own objectives and strategies and critiqued the objectives and strategies of the preliminary field test group in an effort to increase the breadth and utility of the Problems and Solutions Handbook. This method of refining and increasing the Problems andSolutions Handbook was utilized for the remainder of the project.

Conceptually, the 1981-82 school year was spent in a relatively constant and circular shift between Steps 3,4, and 5 of the R&D Cycle. As principals in the preliminary field test group completed the implementation of their I.S.P. objectives, interviews by the Project Coordinator and data from the administrator's logs were content analyzed, re-written in a format stating the objectives, specific strategies for meeting the objective and a statement of the advantages and disadvantages of each strategy. The entries for the Problems and Solutions Handbook were forwarded to principals involved in the main field test for their review and additons. At the same time, the main field test group was involved in the formulation and implementation of their I.S.P.s, with a selection of principals from the first group involved in Phase I of the Program. By the conclusion of the 1981-82 school year participants in the Preliminary Field Test and Main Field Test groups had completed Phases I and II of the Program.

6. Operational Product Revision: (June, 1982-August, 1982)

Revisions of the Study Guide for Phase I: Awareness and Skill Acquisition and The Problems and Solutions Handbook incorporated interview and written evaluative information supplied by the program participants. An initial draft of the Facilitator's Manual was prepared based upon the daily log kept by the Project Coordinator for the first two years of the Project.

News of a funding cutback in the Summer of 1982 of all Personnel Preparation Programs led to the resignation of the Project Coordinator and the hiring of a half time replacement to implement the Operational Field Test of the program. Responsibilities were realigned; with the Project Coordinator taking responsibility for all field work and the Project Director handling all written work on the materials. Although funding was restored by the Fall of 1982, this arrangement was continued.

7. Operational Field Testing: (August, 1982-May, 1983)

In addition to the school district that had agreed to participate in the Project during the 1982-83 school year, contact was made with the five (5) area school districts that had held their participation in abeyance. One district agreed to meet with the project staff but the remaining districts declined participation stating that their principals 'had enough to do' An agreement to participate at a later date was reached with the first district, thus, the sample for the Operational Field Test became limited to one school district where participation by principals would be on a voluntary basis.

A presentation of the Program to the District's twenty-five(25) principals elicited a sample of ten (10) who were willing to engage in Phase I and II of the Program. A canvas of the preliminary field test district yielded two (2) administrators who wished to participate in Phase III (Follow-up) of the program and six (6) principals desiring to repeat Phase I and II as they had been transferred to different schools.

The format of the implementation of Phases I and II during the Operational Field Test consisted of individual meetings with the principals with evaluative data collected from interviews and an analysis of the logs kept by the principals during Phase II.

Summative evaluative data was collected from the three (3) School Superintendents whose districts were involved in the project to elicit information regarding planning and programming skills of the participants. Each principal who participated in some phase of the program was asked to evaluate the project to gain information about their perceptions of the program.

8. Final Product Revision: (June, 1983 - August, 1983)

Data from the summative evaluations along with information gathered from interviews and participant logs were incorporated into final versions of the Study Guide for Phase I: Awareness and Skill Acquisition and the Problems and Solutions Handbook. A computer scoring option from Lenoir-Rhyne College was included in the Study Guide. The Problems and Solutions Handbook was expanded to include additional objectives and strategies and an index. Forms were inserted into the final version of the Problems and Solutions Handbook to enable administrators who engage in the Three Phase Program to send additional objectives and strategies to Project TAMEC to be included in subsequent revisions of the materials. Logs kept by the

two Coordinators of the Project, along with data collected during their exit interviews, were incorporated into the Facilitator's Manual. A review of the manual by two Directors of Special Education in local school districts who did not participate in the project yielded suggestions which were incorporated into the final version of the Manual.

9. Dissemination and Implementation: (August, 1983-present)

Presentations regarding the development and content of the Three Phase Program have been made to various State and National conferences. Two administrator preparation projects within the State of North Carolina have been supplied with copies of the Three Phase Program materials for consideration in their training programs. Arrangements for nation wide distribution of the products have been made with the National Clearing House of Rehabilitation Training Materials at Oklahoma State University.

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:

Data from rating scales completed by principals participating in the project, superintendents of the three school districts, comparison of organizational and program plans developed by participants and non-participants, and an analysis of randomly selected plans from participants and non-participants by the Project staff seemed to indicate that the administrators who participated in the Three Phase Program were:

1. Better able to use a data base for planning organizational and programmatic changes for their schools.

2. Better able to isolate interpersonal and organizational impediments to the implementation of change.

3. More aware of the needs of regular and special education students in their schools.

4. More realistic in their planning and generationof strategies for implementing their plans.

Principals who participated in the development and field testing of the Three Phase Program indicated they felt that the self-directed approach utilized by the project was more effective than a large group or workshop type of in-service program because they were provided with a mechanism to work on problems pertinent to their own school.

Thirty-eight (38) school administrators from the following types of school organizations participated in the development and field testing of the program materials:

5 Secondary School Administrators (Grades 9-12 or Grades 10-12)

7 Middle School/Junior High School Administrators (Grades 6-8 or Grades 7-9)

24 Elementary Scshool Administrators (Grades k-6 or Grades K-8)

2 Non-graded Special School Administrators (Trainable Mentally Handicapped and Multi-handicapped)

Of the thirty-eight (38) participants, ten (10) terminated their participation due to school transfers, promotions to central office positions, termination, or lack of interest in the program. Twenty-eight (28) administrators completed Phase I of the program with twenty (20) completing Phase II. Two administrators became involved in Phase III. The decline in participation during Phases II and III may be attributed to one or more of the following factors:

1. A relatively small number of administrators from the initial school district (N=8) were involved in all three years of the Project. Shifts in the superintendency and the composition of the central office staff led to massive inter-school transfers of principals. Thus, only two administrators who began the program were still in their original schools when the project was completed. The other principals requested repetition of Phase I of the program as the data collected in their original schools or by their predecessors did not represent a valid premise for the formulation of I.S.P. objectives.

2. The gradual inclusion of additional school districts during the course of the project, with the third district participating during the final year, made it impossible for each participant to engage in all three phases of the program.

3. Many principals perceived their involvement in accreditation and their implementation of a new teacher evaluation system was taking precedence over participation in the Three Phase Program. Although participants were shown how the Three Phase Program complemented their other responsibilities, some felt that participation in the program was 'extra work' and used a variety of delaying tactics with project staff until they had completed their other obligations.

4. Some administrators felt that they had been pressured by the central office to participate in the program. As a result, they appeared to engage in passive-aggressive types of behavior.

The atmosphere surrounding the development and field testing of the Three Phase Program was one of radical change, with funding cutbacks to local educational programs, a growing emphasis on competence and accountability, shifts in school leadership, and public concern about the quality of education. Participants in the program seemed to be better equipped to deal with the changes initiated on National, State and local levels by utilizing change agent skills to provide quality services to all children in their schools.

A salient implication of the process used in the development of the Program is that there is never a 'good time' for staff development. School districts leaders must commit to an in-service plan and arrange the contingencies to insure maximal participation in the activities. If an in-service plan for administrators is perceived by principals as having application for their schools, and will give them some insight into their role and school organization, they may be more motivated to participate.

The products developed through the Research and Development approach utilized by Project TAMEC seem to represent a cost effective means of providing school administrators with programmatic and organizational change competencies to meet the instructional and interpersonal needs of their students, staff members and members of the community. Although the Three Phase Program was developed with a focus toward the handicapped student, participants came to the realization that many organizational and interpersonal variables which appeared to be only tangential to their expectional children's program had to be dealt with prior to the implementation of programmatic change. Thus, the Three Phase Program enabled administrators to receive an overview of their entire organization and develop strategies to benefit the whole school environment.

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